

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9572

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: COCA CROP SUBSTITUTION (RURAL DEVELOPMENT)

REF: STATE 43089

1. THE AMBASSADOR HAD NOT YET ARRIVED AT POST WHEN THE SELECT COMMITTEE MISSION AND GAO STAFF VISITED BOLIVIA; THEREFORE, THE FIRST POINT IS THAT HE IS ONE "EMBASSY OFFICIAL" WHOSE VIEWS ARE NOT AT ALL REPRESENTED BY THE STATEMENTS QUOTED IN REFTEL.

2. MY INVESTIGATIONS INDICATED THAT THE EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS ABUSE AND CONTROL AND FROM THE DRAFT GAO REPORT ON DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS IN SOUTH AMERICA CITED IN PARA 1 OF REFTEL ALSO DO NOT RPT NOT REPRESENT FAIRLY THE THINKING OF MISSION STAFF. THEY APPARENTLY REPRESENT MISINTERPRETATION OF RESPONSES TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS' AND GAO'S EFFORTS TO GET SIMPLE YES OR NO REPLIES TO A SERIES OF COMPLEX QUESTIONS.

3. BOTH GROUPS ASKED THE QUESTION QTE CAN YOU EXPECT TO FIND A SUBSTITUTE CROP FOR COCA WHICH WILL GIVE THE FARMER AN
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EQUAL INCOME? UNQTE TO THIS QUESTION THE EMBASSY, AID MISSION AND DEA REPLY WAS NO RPT NO. ON NUMBROUS OC-CASIONS CHARGE (OR DCM), AID MISSION DIRECTOR AND OTHERS REPEATEDLY EXPLAINED TO BOTH GROUPSTHAT CROP SUBSTITUTION WILL NOT WORK ALONE. WHAT IS INVOLVED IS A CARROT-AND STICK APPROACH. THE AVAILABILITY OF CROP SUBSTITUTES MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY (1) INVESTMENT IN PROCESSING, TRANSPORT AND

MARKETING FACILITIES WHICH WILL INCREASE INCOME TO THE REGION, (2) GENERAL INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE NON-MONETARY INCOME ASPECTS OF WELFARE AND, CRITICALLY (3) ADEQUATE AND EFFICIENT CONTROL PROCEDURES. THE PURPOSE OF "CROP SUBSTITUTION" IN THIS BROADER CONTEXT IS ONE ELEMENT OF AN APPROACH TO MINIMIZING THE NEGATIVE ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF NOT GROWING COCA AND SUPPORT ON ADEQUATE LEVEL OF GENERAL WELFARE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE REGION.

4. THE DEPARTMENT IS CORRECT (PARA 2 REFTEL) IN NOTING THE MISUNDERSTANDING WHICH ARISES OUT OF THE CONCEPT OF STRAIGHT QTE CROP SUBSTITUTION UNQTE. IT APPEARED EVIDENT TO THE EMBASSY THAT THE CODEL AND, TO A LESSER EXTEND, THE GAO REPRESENTATIVES WERE ATTEMPTING TO REINFORCE A PRECONCEIVED OPINION. THERE IS LITTLE ROOM TO SUSPECT OTHERWISE GIVEN THE NUMBER OF TIMES THEY WENT OVER THE SAME SUBJECT. TIME AND AGAIN WE STRESSED: CROP SUBSTITUTION ALONE, NO--CROP SUBSTITUTION WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONTROLS, YES.

5. TO THE AMBASSADOR THIS UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT ILLUSTRATES THE DESIRABILITY OF NOT RPT NOT USING THE TERMINOLOGY "CROP SUBSTITUTION" WHICH IMPLIES TO MANY PEOPLE A SIMPLE MECHANISTIC PROCESS WHICH FAR UNDERESTIMATES THE COMPLEXITY AND DURATION OF THE MULTIPHASE PROCESS (ECONOMIC, AGRICULTURAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH; CROP DEVELOPMENT; INVESTMENT IN INFRA-
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STRUCTURE--ROADS, ELECTRIFICATION, ETC.--NECESSARY TO MARKET AND UPGRADE OR PROCESS THE CROP; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; CROP REGISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ACREAGE LIMITS) WHICH, UNLIKE THE POPULAR IMAGE OF "CROP SUBSTITUTION", CAN RPT CAN ULTIMATELY ACHIEVE OUR NARCOTICS AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES.
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